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FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8436
INFO RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA PRIORITY 1352
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1678
RUEHLE/AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG PRIORITY 0005
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY 0058
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 0799
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 0134
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY 0113
RHMFISS/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY IA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L YAOUNDE 001497

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STATE FOR INL/C AND AF/C
DHS/ICE FOR CHER IANNACCONE
LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA ACTION OFFICERS
PRETORIA FOR DHS/ICE
ABUJA FOR LEGATT
PRETORIA FOR DHS/ICE
JUSTICE FOR PATRICIA PETTY AND DAVID WARNER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/19/2017
TAGS: [KCOR](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CM](#)
SUBJECT: CAMEROON'S JUSTICE MINISTER ON CORRUPTION LEGAL
ASSISTANCE

REF: A. YAOUNDE 1476

[1B](#). YAOUNDE 1236
[1C](#). YAOUNDE 1235

Classified By: Poloff Tad Brown for reasons 1.4 b and d.

[11](#). (C) Ambassador joined the Canadian and Dutch COMs on December 18 for a joint meeting with Cameroonian Vice Prime Minister/Minister for Justice Amadou Ali focused on the GRC's request for legal assistance (ref b) in pursuing overseas bank accounts of Cameroonians tied to corruption. Explaining to Ali that the USDOJ's formal response would be forthcoming, the Ambassador summarized DOJ's concerns, focusing on the inadequacy of the information provided. She and the other COMs suggested the creation of a structure within the Ministry of Justice that would have the legal competence needed to handle such a request. Ali said he had already decided on such an approach, and said he would soon forward a list of two magistrates who would join Francis Dooh Collins to bring more expertise to this issue. Ali further agreed to limit the GRC's next Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) request to four individuals who were recently convicted of corruption at the Douala Port (ref a).

[12](#). (C) Ali said that Dooh Collins had helped the GRC identify a substantial amount of stashed money in Luxemburg banks and 1,200,000 Swiss Francs in a Swiss UBS Bank account belonging to former Finance Minister (and poster-boy for high-level corruption) Polycarpe Abah Abah. Ali said the GRC hoped to recover some of these funds soon and reiterated that the GRC's highest priority in these cases remains the recovery of looted funds, noting that public opinion was focused less on mere convictions of corrupt officials than on the return of looted assets. Ali said he was waiting for a list of names with accounts overseas but opined that the GRC would not have sufficient information to pursue legal action against all these names.

13. (C) Comment: Although Ali was visibly disappointed that we were asking more of him, he quickly agreed to operationalize a more formal structure within the Ministry of Justice and to limit the forthcoming MLA to a more manageable scope. We will continue to coordinate with other diplomatic missions approached by the GRC (Canada, Netherlands, UK, Italy) to seek as common a message as possible. We will also engage with the Ministry of Justice's technical team to determine how best to proceed including, if appropriate, putting them in direct communication with their counterparts in Washington. End comment.
GARVEY